



# North and West Northamptonshire EHC Teams: The Annual Review Process - Guide for Schools and Education Settings in Northamptonshire

## Overview

All students with an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan must have an Annual Review. It must occur on (or before) the anniversary of the EHC Plan's issue and then within 12 months of the previous Annual Review. SEND Code of Practice (2015), Chapter 9 - Reviewing an EHC Plan 9.169.

The Annual Review meeting is usually held in the student's school or education setting, and the Local Authority (LA) is informed. The LA is responsible for the Annual Review process. In Northamptonshire, the Annual Review meeting is delegated to the school.

The school must conduct the Annual Review meeting in partnership with the student and their parent (s)/carer(s). It must record their views, wishes, and feelings (including their right to request a Personal Budget each year). For more information about Personal Budgets, please see Northamptonshire's Local Offer. Please note: Personal Budgets are not additional funds.

The Annual Review must focus on the student's progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in their EHC Plan.

The Annual Review must consider whether the outcomes and short steps remain appropriate.

The LA will send the school a list of all students and their review dates each term.

## Gathering Information for the Annual Review Meeting

The school will need to gather information and advice, which should provide:

- Details about the student's progress and how they are accessing teaching and learning.
- Whether the current special educational provision is effective and what impact it has had.
- Whether the current health and social care provisions are effective and how they are ensuring good progress towards outcomes.
- A review of any Direct Payments (including the impact).
- Progress towards the outcomes stated in the EHC Plan.

Additional professional advice or reports should be obtained if there are changes to a student's special educational needs or provision.

## The Annual Review Meeting

In most cases, the LA delegates the Annual Review meeting to the school that knows the student best. There will be exceptions, such as students who are electively home educated or not in an educational setting.

Invitations to attend the Annual Review meeting need to be sent out to all concerned, at least (and not less than) two weeks in advance of the date of the meeting.

Contributors (including those unable to attend) will be asked to provide a written report regarding the student's progress. Contributors should send their reports to the meeting's organisers promptly. The meeting's organisers should share the reports with participants two weeks before the Annual Review meeting.

Information and advice from students and professionals should inform any appropriate changes to the EHC Plan. Any disagreement about the changes must be reported to the LA (along with the Annual Review meeting details).

It will be helpful if the school gives everyone a copy of the most recent EHC Plan for the Annual Review meeting.

At the Annual Review meeting, you need to:

- Consider the student's progress towards the outcomes detailed, and consider whether they are still appropriate.
- Consider what provision is required to help the student prepare for adulthood and independent living (from the earliest years).
- Review any interim targets set by the school.
- Set new interim targets for the coming year and (where appropriate) agree on new outcomes. The targets may come from the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or EHC Plan.

It may be helpful to take a copy of the student's most recent EHC Plan and annotate it as part of the Annual Review meeting. The school can submit the annotated EHC Plan to the LA's locality area EHC team (along with the other supporting documents).

Please note that the government has stipulated that "EHC plans are not expected to be amended on a very frequent basis" SEND Code of Practice (2015).

North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) and West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) provide a template for schools and colleges that helps direct Annual Review meetings. They would encourage all education settings to complete the template and promptly return it to the LA. The Annual Review



meeting template, other information, and a link to the student survey (Viewpoint) are available on the [EHC webpages](http://ow.ly/Fu5v50KqeZl) (<http://ow.ly/Fu5v50KqeZl>) on the sovereign Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) website. The template is also available as an online form.

The Annual Review meeting's organiser must prepare (and send) a report of the meeting to everyone invited, including the LA, within two weeks of the meeting. It should include all professional reports submitted.

**NB: In order to meet the deadlines set out in the SEND Code of Practice (2015), the LA has no more than four weeks from the date of the Annual Review meeting to decide whether:**

- to continue with the EHC Plan
- to amend the EHC Plan (usually at key stage transfers and Year-9)
- or to cease the EHC Plan

### Person-Centred Practice (PCP)

NNC and WNC are committed to students being at the centre of processes. They would urge the Annual Review meeting's organiser to consider the ethos of person-centred practice. Training for PCP can be arranged through the Inclusion Network's SEND Training and Development sessions. We recommend the [Helen Sanderson Associates' Guidance for Schools](http://ow.ly/X4Qt50KqfmB) (<http://ow.ly/X4Qt50KqfmB>). You may wish to consider some of the following in preparation for the meeting:

- Is the venue appropriate for the young person and their family?
- How will you enable young people to contribute?
- How will you enable their families to contribute?
- Is the room big enough for everyone to meet in?
- Have you had the room set out in a person-centred practice style?
- Have you all the resources you need? (Flipcharts, pens, refreshments etc.)

### Year 9 and Above (Preparing for Adulthood)

Annual Review meetings take place in Year-9 and above. They must focus on considering options and choices for the next phase of education and what options will be available when the student leaves the school.

[Viewpoint](http://ow.ly/WGCH50Kqfsi) (<http://ow.ly/WGCH50Kqfsi>) is an approved international provider commissioned by the LA to create an online survey for students with current EHC Plans. Each student can complete the survey when their Annual Review is due. Students aged 7+ should be invited (and encouraged) to answer questions about their life at school, at home, out and about, and when using health services.

The school can view the individual's results and a report about their school. Viewpoint can provide schools with their own "manager access" at no extra cost.

Students can complete the Viewpoint survey at two levels. One level is much simpler and was designed for primary students or those who struggle with comprehension. It uses the pictorial symbols that are used in primary schools. The other level is for more confident readers. However, both versions of the survey have technology that will read the questions out loud.

Individual Viewpoint passwords and logins are the same, and the 'Organisation' is always NhantsEHC. Please get in touch with your EHC admin team for passwords.

## Timescales

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) states that an Annual Review must occur within 12 months of the issue of the EHC Plan or the last Annual Review.

Within four weeks of the Annual Review meeting, the LA must decide whether to:

1. **Maintain the EHC Plan in its current form:** The LA must send families information about their rights to mediation, disagreement services, and timescales.
2. **Amend the EHC Plan:** The LA must send the amended EHC Plan to the family, showing the proposed amendments and the supporting evidence. The LA must inform the family of their rights (including requesting a particular school and having 15 days for comments or representations on the proposed changes). The LA must issue the amended plan within eight weeks of the original amendment notice.
3. **Cease to maintain the EHC Plan:** The LA must provide families with information about their rights to mediation, disagreement services, and timescales.

The Annual Review meeting should make any proposed changes to the student's EHC Plan very clear. Therefore, none of the LA's subsequent decisions should come as a surprise to the families. If the family (or any other attendees) disagree with a proposed change, it must be recorded in the Annual Review meeting's supporting documents (which are submitted to the LA).

Any school that does not submit an Annual Review meeting on time (to the LA) will be reminded by their locality area EHC team. These meetings will be classed as 'overdue'. It is an expectation as per the SEND Code of Practice (2015) that education settings must cooperate with the LA.

## Transfer Dates Between Phases

For transfers into (or between) schools, transfers from early years settings to schools, transfers from KS1 to KS2, and transfers from KS2 to KS3 - Annual Reviews and amendments must be completed by the LA by 15th February each year.

## Transfers From Early Years Settings to Schools

We ask that the student's EHC Plan is reviewed before they are due to start their statutory education. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) suggests that early years can hold Annual Reviews every six months.

## Transfers From KS1 to KS2

In Northamptonshire, we ask that Year-5 students' Annual Review meetings consider the transfer from Year-6 to Year-7. It should be submitted to the LA by the end of Year-5. This should allow enough time for all parties to consider the choices for the future.

**A school place must be named in the EHC Plan by 15th February for Year-6 students.**

## Transfers From KS4 to Post-16

Reviews for students in Year-11 must be submitted to allow sufficient time for all parties to consider the choices for the future.

In Northamptonshire, we ask that Year-10 students' Annual Review meetings consider the transfer for students as their statutory education ends.

Where relevant, Year-10 students' Annual Review meetings should include effective planning for students moving from children's social care to adult social care and health services. In these Annual Review meetings, it is essential to seek (and record) the student's views, wishes, and feelings. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) states that the Annual Review meeting's organiser should invite representatives from post-16 settings, especially if the student has expressed a desire to attend a particular setting.

**An educational placement has to be named in the EHC Plan by 31st March for post-16 students.**

## Complex Cases

Where a student's arrangements are more complex, a representative from the locality area EHC team will attend when appropriate. Please get in touch with your locality area EHC team to make arrangements.

## Children in the Care of the LA

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) advises that for looked-after children (LAC), the Annual Review should, if possible and appropriate, coincide with one of the reviews in their Care Plan. In particular, the personal education plan (PEP) element of the Care Plan. Schools may be able to coordinate this with the Annual Review process to improve the efficiency of their reviewing timetables.

## Tick List - Please Use This to Help Manage the Process

- Set annual review meetings for all students in your setting with an EHC plan
- Agree date of annual review meeting with parents/ carers and formally invite
- Inform LA of dates via your EHC Locality team
- Send dates to all relevant professionals
- Gather any necessary reports
- Issue reports and meeting invitations at least two weeks in advance
- Hold meeting

Within two weeks (or sooner) inform LA of review meeting by either:

- submitting the Annual Review online form (with supporting evidence attached)
- or including the Annual Review Meeting template with supporting evidence by email

Supporting evidence may include:

- Annotated EHC plan (for proposals to amend)
- Copies of any disagreements
- Copies of supporting documents submitted for the annual review meeting.
- Updated targets
- Updated outcomes (if appropriate)
- Send a report of the meeting to everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting
- Set the date of the annual review meeting for the following year

- 
- [SEND Code of Practice, Jan 2015](#) / <http://ow.ly/uapg50KqfyG> (PDF 3.2MB) for reference.
- 

## Northamptonshire Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Teams

**Web:** <https://tinyurl.com/NorthantsEHC>

**Northampton Email:** [EHCNorthampton.NCC@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:EHCNorthampton.NCC@westnorthants.gov.uk)

**Daventry & South Northants Email:** [ehcdav.ncc@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:ehcdav.ncc@westnorthants.gov.uk)

**Kettering & Corby Email:** [EHCKettering.ncc@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:EHCKettering.ncc@northnorthants.gov.uk)

**Wellingborough & East Northants Email:** [EHCWellingborough.ncc@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:EHCWellingborough.ncc@northnorthants.gov.uk)



## Notes

